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ABSTRACT

The presentation from a conference program provides an overview of the framework and process of a mandated competency based teacher education (CBTE) program for training special education teachers in New York State. The New York State definition for a CBTE program is provided. It is noted that the project coordinates CBTE efforts--particularly at the preservice stage; sponsors acquisition, development, evaluation and dissemination of CBTE materials, techniques, processes, and products; has aided in the development of an alternative certification model; and facilitates effective interaction within and between consortia. (SB)

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CBTE PROJECT: THE FRAMEWORK FOR THE PROCESS OF COLLABORATIVE PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Remarks of Joseph T. Gilmore

CEC, Chicago April 7, 1976

Good afternoon. On behalf of my fellow panelists let me cordially welcome you to this session. We are delighted to be here with you to share some information about the work of our CBTE project. We sincerely hope we can serve you well, and to do this we decided that each of us would present for no more than ten minutes; this should allow ample time for questions from the audience that might individualize your own concerns and help us to be on target with your particular area of interest in joining us this afternoon. With me today, as indicated in the program, are Dr. Patricia Kay, Dr. William Penner and Mr. Larry Kilian. Larry has kindly consented to fill in for Cecile Segal who is listed on your program. Unfortunately an illness prevents Cecile from being with us. As the program notes, I will give an overview of the framework and process of CBTE program development in New York State. Pat will address the development and field testing of CUNY's special education modules. Larry will speak of the results and implementation of the modules' field testing, and Bill will speak on some processes in developing a competency assessment model.

In presenting the framework to you I hope to share with you four considerations:

1. Nature and purpose of the CBTE project.
2. The state context in which the project has worked.
3. A capsule overview of some things the project has done.
4. Some results.

Let me begin by putting those four considerations in a few sentences. The CBTE project through a state level policy board representing the total educational community, coordinates competence based teacher education efforts, particularly at the preservice end of the preservice - inservice continuum. The project sponsors the acquisition, development, evaluation and dissemination of CBTE materials, techniques, processes and products. The project has aided in the development of an alternative certification model. The project facilitates effective interaction within consortia and between consortia. Let me now attempt to explain and clarify.

In June, 1972 the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York, through the Division for Handicapped Children of the State Education Department, was awarded by the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped a grant to explore the competency based

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hypothesis and its implications for teacher training. Our major purposes were the two just mentioned: first, to acquire, develop and evaluate instructional materials and assessment techniques deemed necessary for the successful implementation of competency based programs and, second, to provide an alternate performance model for the certification of teachers. Subcontracts were drawn up with a number of agencies. The particular focus of the work at CUNY is on instructional materials and assessment techniques. In the first project year Syracuse University was supported in the development of a master's level CBTE MR program; for the second and third project years State University College at Plattsburgh has been supported in their collaborative development of a special education CBTE program. The convergence of a number of factors made the existence and activities of the project funded by this grant extremely timely and relevant for the special education community in New York State. Much sooner than anticipated, the horizons of our work were broadened towards a special committment of the project to the more than forty special education degree granting institutions with 110 special education programs in the state. This change in emphasis was occasioned by a significant occurrence in September, 1972. In September, 1972 the State Board of Regents issued a paper, Education Beyond High School: The Regents Tentative Statewide Plan for the Development of Post Secondary Education 1972. This paper carefully outlined the Board's endorsement of a competence based, field-centered approach to the professional preparation of educational personnel. The Board charged the institutions of higher education in the state with the responsibility of demonstrating that all new proposed training programs submitted for initial certification after September 1, 1973 contain the priority elements of a competence based training structure.

A program submission schedule established by the State Education Department's Division of Teacher Education and Certification called for all colleges and universities than preparing elementary and special education personnel to submit their revised training proposal plans by February 1, 1975 to be reviewed for program registration in a competence based, field centered mode. So every training program in the state had a major job to do in formulating and implementing its training program in this new mode. Since there are many different definitions of competence based education let me give you the New York State definition under which our institutions of higher education have been mandated to operate.

NEW YORK STATE DEFINES A COMPETENCE-BASED PROGRAM OF PREPARATION AS ONE WHICH PROVIDES ACCEPTABLE EVIDENCE THAT, THROUGH THE COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES OF COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, SCHOOL DISTRICTS, AND PROFESSIONAL STAFF OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS, THERE EXISTS:

1. AN ANALYSIS AND STATEMENT OF THE ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND FUNCTIONS OF THE PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS FOR WHICH PERSONS ARE BEING PREPARED.

2. A READILY AVAILABLE STATEMENT OF THE SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE, AND ATTITUDES EXPECTED OF PROGRAM GRADUATES, STATED AS EXPLICITLY AND OBJECTIVELY AS POSSIBLE.

3. A STATEMENT OF WHAT CONSTITUTES ACCEPTABLE EVIDENCE OF THE ATTAINMENT OF THE EXPECTED SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE, AND ATTITUDES AS WELL AS THE STANDARDS AND CONDITIONS BY WHICH THE EVIDENCE IS GATHERED.

4. AN INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM WHICH IS CONGRUENT WITH THE EXPECTED OUTCOMES.

5. A MEANS BY WHICH THE PROGRAM IS MONITORED, EVALUATED, AND MODIFIED IN LIGHT OF THE EVALUATION.

A COMPETENCE-BASED SYSTEM PERMITS THE WIDEST VARIETY OF PROGRAM DESIGN SINCE IT DOES NOT PRESCRIBE ANY SET OF COURSES OR LEARNING ACTIVITIES.

A key feature of the New York State experience is the collaborative focus on people and organizations in program conceptualization and implementation. The partnership formed by the three mandated groups (colleges, school administrators, teaching profession) is called a consortium. A statewide policy board for the CBTE project involves simultaneously all the mandated consortial elements of the educational community comprising the total system. This board acts in an advisory capacity to alert us to the stances adopted by their various constituencies. With this help, the project has assisted the various consortia of the special education community around the state to formulate and discuss their training program designs both within their own consortium and with other consortia. The project has held two statewide conferences and thirteen regional workshops. Also, a variety of technical assistance papers have been prepared and disseminated. Project staff have served in an advisory capacity to the State Education Department's Division of Teacher Education and Certification in a variety of consultant roles, most recently in a statewide conference on assessment to be held at the end of this month. Also in the planning stage is our own third statewide special education CBTE Conference to be held in Plattsburgh, New York in late August. For this conference, as for our other conferences and workshops, we have conducted needs assessment surveys to provide help to the consortia which is as realistic as possible. The August Plattsburgh Conference will also address assessment which is almost universally agreed, most certainly in New York State, to be a crucial problem in CBTE programming. In the last eighteen months our emphasis has been much more "practical" rather than "issue" oriented.

We have published and disseminated, statewide, materials produced through these conferences and workshops. Through the kind offices of the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped and recently through the Teacher Education Division of CEC, one conference proceedings has been distributed nationally, Design for Competence Based Education in Special Education. If you have not seen this book, and you wish to explore some of the promise, processes and problems of CBTE programming, a limited number of single copies are available upon request to our office.

So, the CBTE project has been in a uniquely satisfying position of providing technical assistance and support to the special education consortia in the extremely difficult task laid on them of being the first in the state to conceptualize and implement their training programs in the competence based mode. And an extremely difficult task it has been.

The "tooling up" process towards the competency mode in a collaborative way created a great bit of anxiety and, in some cases, not a little hostility. Significant changes in direction in a process model of competency identification, focused training, assessment of mastery, and validation is a highly complex, time consuming and costly process, and can drain the energy of personnel resources. This is true even of those highly committed to such changes, not only those

reacting most exclusively to the state mandate. The state may mandate collaboration but real, live individuals who are also at the same time representative of a particular organizational view, are the ones who have to put it all together. You may also have heard rumors of financial questions in New York, city and state; diminishing resources at all levels of education have tended to compound the problems. Whatever progress there has been - and I believe the progress has been considerable - has come "out of the hides" of a great number of talented, resourceful, and hardworking people, particularly but not exclusively, on the college campus. The basic purpose of the conferences and of sharing project produced materials was to provide the consortia the opportunity to identify and resolve some of the major difficulties encountered in beginning steps toward delineating assumptions, establishing priorities, and indicating the general parameters of such professional planning.

I wish to avoid the debatable issue of the wisdom of a state's mandating CBTE. Let me note, however, some of the positive results our project has seen among the special education consortia around our state who have moved, with uneven efforts, towards mandated CBTE programs.

Understandably, and perhaps not unexpectedly, the program situations are far from the ideal which much CBTE literature promises. Also, as I indicated before, CBTE is far more time and resource consuming than a deceptively simple view might promise. Even with those qualifiers, though, I think it safe to make this global statement: A moderate, realistic, practical approach to CBTE has not produced all the goodies that ardent CBTE proponents have promised; neither has it featured the dehumanization and mechanistic technician production decried by CBTE's most trenchant critics. My own view is that, on balance, the results have been positive steps in a healthy direction.

1. There has been demonstrable evidence that the colleges have had profitable inputs if not the ideal of meaningful and significant input. The vice is also versa. Public school administrators and teachers have begun to realize some of the constraints on college faculties.

2. A sweeping re-examination of teacher education programs has been an ongoing process, within faculties, within consortia, between consortia and at the state level. Purposes have been questioned, programs integrated, overlap and gaps discovered, resources reallocated, and the like.

3. Conceptualizations of program have often remained too broad and general, but there has been a lot of movement towards greater specificty.

4. Statement of skills, knowledge and attitudes are more public and explicit than previously, and students have been given clearer statements of program expectations.

5. Greater efforts to provide students alternative learning activities have been made, as well as some movement to individualized instruction.

6. Some progress has been made in the area of learner accountability and professor accountability.

7. There has been a great improvement in the area of student guidance.

8. There has been a definite movement towards placement of students to have earlier, more frequent experiences in the field.

9. Much interest has been generated in studying some crucial areas, e.g. competency assessment and program evaluation.